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## THE DEATH OF PAN.

BORNE on the wind there came a bitter wailing  
From the rough islands and the Grecian shore,  
A cry to them far off in comfort sailing,  
"Great Pan is dead, is dead for evermore!"

And then the leaves took up the lamentation,  
And whirled wild fingers to the tossing sky;  
And then the waves moaned in with iteration  
Of that sad calling from the cliffs on high;

Then sang the bird with pitiful petition  
To that dead ear no more attuned to song;  
Then all the creatures felt a premonition  
Of doom that threatened, nor would tarry long.

And Pan was dead, and rustics in the meadow  
Heard the strange cry go sighing through the air,  
And cowered, affrighted at the sudden shadow  
Cast by the dread abiding everywhere.

And thou and I, good friend, when winter passes  
So swiftly by us, slaying as he goes,  
Hear the same sighing from the smitten grasses,  
Perceive the creatures telling us their woes.

For Pan is dead—if this be all the story:  
And earth is dark—if this be all its cheer:  
Yet is there in the dying such a glory  
As giveth hope of other glory near.

And by and by, beside the murmuring river,  
The reed shall rustle and blue-bird sing,  
And by and by the starting leaves shall quiver  
Under the breath of an awaking spring.

—Samuel W. Duffield.

## MY ONLY GHOST.

I HAD from childhood that low order of courage which consists in not knowing what fear is. It was an imperfection of nature which was unnecessarily lauded at the expense of my brothers and sisters, who, having a more poetical and more highly strung organization than myself, did know what fear was. But I laughed aloud when my dear friend Mrs. Morton asked me if I should be afraid to live in her beautiful house alone during the summer months. Alone so far as companionship went, but with a man and his wife to cook and wash for me, to shut up and open and protect the premises. I afraid? Never! So she gave me ample fiduciary powers. She was going to Europe. I, a poor relation, was only too glad to have such a luxurious home. As she took me over the house, I saw her eyes fill with tears as she essayed to open a certain door. I remembered that even into this fortunate life had come the inevitable grief. There was one empty chair, one dead lamb. The eldest daughter had married, had gone abroad for her wedding journey, and had been brought home to be laid in yonder churchyard which we could see from the windows.

Yes, this was Gertrude's room! There was her portrait on the wall. A straight young woman, with a profusion of light hair, blue eyes with a far-off look, a melancholy beauty, tender and twilight, that face which the French call *prédestinée*. She was dressed in diaphanous white, with here and there a blue ribbon, and her beautiful hands were clasped on what seemed to be a balcony.

Around the room were costly trifles, the spoils of an European trip. The room was fitted up queerly with handsome fire-arms, suits of armor, boxing-gloves, fencing-foils. I looked to Mrs. Morton for an explanation.

"This suite of rooms," she explained, "I have given up to my son-in-law, Mr. Ayscough. During your residence here you will have an occasional visit from him. He comes and goes as he pleases. In the adjoining rooms are poor Gertrude's trunks, which neither he nor I have ever thoroughly unpacked. We have never had the courage."

She led me through the spacious anteroom, linen-closet, and so on, to a large bedroom, where were many trunks. Some dresses hung in the closets, some bottles of perfumes, dressing-cases, and little ladylike things strewed the bureau and tables. A lady might have just stepped from her toilet; it seemed occupied and home-like. It was evident that the young husband found a sad pleasure in thus surrounding himself with the material of grief. Poor Mrs. Morton looked about her through her tears. We retraced our steps, but in passing again through the linen-closet, she turned, and, opening a little door, disclosed a garret staircase.

"Come and see where my children used to go up and down," said she. "These were my rooms in the

days of young motherhood. Come and see my old nursery."

So we mounted upward into the large, spacious room, which deserved a better name than garret, and she led me to a comfortable apartment whose windows commanded a splendid view of the surrounding city. I could not help saying what I have so often felt: "Why are not the disused houses of the rich the summer homes of the poor?" Mrs. Morton did not seem to feel that she was called on to put these comfortable apartments to any such use. She only called my attention to a gigantic wisteria vine which coiled round the window, and which was now in its full blossom, and reached, like "Jack's beanstalk," from the earth, in ever-ascending, ambitious tendrils, to the chimneys of this, the fourth story. We visited the other rooms, which had the plain, decent furniture of an opulent and sensible household. There they were, empty and deserted, but clean and good. We closed the blinds and windows, came down, and retracing our steps through Gertrude's rooms, we locked the doors behind us. I took possession of the key, to deliver it, when he should arrive, to Mr. Ayscough.

Occasionally, I visited these rooms of his to air them, and to see that no stray mouse or other intruder had violated their quiet loneliness. I was very much attracted by Gertrude's picture. It so happened that I had never seen her; her brief hour of youthful bloom, had been spent before I returned, an army officer's widow, from my hard life on the Western frontier. Often, I would stand and look at the picture by the hour,—it fascinated me; then rousing myself from my reverie, I would complete my rounds, and go back to my room.

My life was a very regular one, and not at all unhappy. I rose early, took a bath and a walk, came back to a delicious breakfast carefully prepared for me by Nancy, my cook, housekeeper, and factotum. I dined about five o'clock, and then would wander in the garden; but that getting to be rather disagreeable, I began to take walks around the city, and being of an age and appearance which protected me, I got to prolong these walks into the evening. It was sometimes nine o'clock when Nancy, always a little frightened about me, would let me in, and, giving me a good cup of tea, would remonstrate with me on my lonely wanderings.

On rainy days and evenings, I had the library and pictures to amuse me. Sometimes I would light all the gas and examine the beautiful rooms and pictures by this artificial medium.

After Mrs. Morton had been gone about a month, I had a visit from Mr. Ayscough. He was a pale and interesting young man, very refined and educated, evidently much influenced by his sorrow. He talked incessantly about his wife, and was interested in my admiration of her portrait. He took me in to show me some of the contents of the trunks. To my horror I found that some very valuable jewelry and silver comprised part of that mysterious luggage which had never been unpacked.

"But, Mr. Ayscough," I exclaimed, "you are not going to leave these valuable things here in this empty house, unlocked and strewn about in these trunks, and no one but me to take care of them!"

He laughed a sort of empty laugh, as if he did not care much what became of them, and gave me no sort of satisfaction. From that moment, I do not know why, I began to feel troubled. I had had the comfort of seeing all the family silver carried off to the bank before Mrs. Morton went away, and, if I had thought of them at all, I was convinced that all burglars were aware of that fact and would never trouble me in the least. Now I had a sort of uneasy sensation about Mr. Ayscough's room which I would gladly have had removed—in fact, it became the focus of many uneasy sensations.

Old Nancy had a grievance about this time—she could not open the doors. She would go about her cleaning and sweeping and find here a closet door and there a room door which would not open. She was as deaf as a post, and our discussions about the locks must have re-echoed nearly to the next street. A little dressing-room opening out of my bedroom, and thence into a large empty room, often troubled her, and a closet going out of the library was her great annoyance, when I came to the rescue. I could generally open the doors, but the library closet proved such a nuisance that we concluded to send for a locksmith. He came, found the locks all right, advised a little sweet oil, and told us that doors were very apt to swell in the damp, hot summer.

Mr. Ayscough liked to come to the library and look over the new books which were sent to me to criticise. One day he took up a book on Spiritualism which soon fascinated him. I was extremely sorry when I saw how he fastened to it and began to drink in a sort of dangerous comfort from it. He talked to me about it, and asked me if I had any belief in the communion of spirits.

He found a most robust unbeliever in me. All my habits of thought, my rough experience of life, my anti-nervous temperament were against the theory and practice of Spiritualism. He went away after a few days, and I returned to my lonely life. Perhaps I was not sorry when I heard one day the unusual sound of a voice asking for me at the front door, and went down to see my nephew Richard, a good young fellow from the West, who had come to the city to make his fortune, and who had found me out.

Richard was of course very anxious to see the sights of the great metropolis, so we agreed to make a tour of the amusements. He took me out of an evening, perhaps three times a week. I remember being very much charmed with a pair of acrobats, a man and woman, who were entirely independent of the law of gravitation, and who sailed through the air "on the flying trapeze" with all the *aplomb* and fearlessness of birds. Richard used to laugh at me as I, night after night, declared in favor of the acrobats. The woman was a beautiful creature, and had for me a strange and weird attraction which I could not account for; but it is unnecessary to try to account for some things. I began at this time to believe that I was growing fanciful, a thing which never had occurred before. Once or twice I had sleepless nights. I thought a great deal too much about the jewelry and silver in Mr. Ayscough's rooms, and I began to make my inspections of the house with a sort of anxiety.

One of my great pleasures, particularly of a Sunday evening, had been to have Thomas light all the gas that I might see the works of art to advantage; and it gave me, too, a sense of companionship which I needed. On that evening Nancy and Thomas took their only pleasure. They went out, leaving me entirely alone. The policeman in the square had become somewhat of an acquaintance of mine, and I had provided myself with a whistle by which I could call him if necessary in these periods of utter loneliness. Sometimes, as he walked under the window, I would step to the balcony and speak to him; so long as I heard his tramp, tramp, I was not utterly isolated.

One Sunday evening I was walking up and down, looking particularly at a fine Venetian picture,—a wilderness of color and action—one of those pictures of Leutze, in which a myriad of events are pictured as going on at the same time,—when my eye was irresistibly drawn toward a mirror, and I saw—good God! what did I see?—a tall, straight, female figure, covered with a profusion of light hair. I saw the dead Gertrude, stepped from her grave, the very presentment of the picture I had so often studied. She was leaning on the balusters of the grand staircase, and the image was reflected through two or three mirrors, for I could not see the staircase where I stood. She reached me by reflection!

The horror was so great that I do not know how long I looked. I am sure I saw her start to go, and I know I followed her. I lost sight of both mirror and staircase before I reached the door, but certainly I heard a door shut at the top of the stairs as I reached the lower step. It was the door of Mr. Ayscough's apartment!

The vision was gone, but two senses had been appealed to—sight and hearing. I had sense enough to open the front door, sound my whistle, and then I dropped senseless. When I resumed my consciousness I found myself on the sofa. The private watchman was bending over me and I told him my story.

"You're a getting a brain fever, ma'am," said he; "you're alone too much; you must try for a little more company. If you saw a woman goin' up-stairs we'll soon catch her; but I guess she was *here*," tapping his forehead. So, summoning some of his brotherhood, we went to Mr. Ayscough's rooms, which we found locked, every thing undisturbed; the portrait was in its accustomed place. Was it true that she had stepped from it to come and speak to me? Or, had my brain furnished that tall, white figure?

Of course it was the latter, and I did not intend to be conquered by such an illusion. I had an inter-